

Please follow the black and white arrows and number signs. Parts of this tour are not wheelchair accessible. This tour will take approx. 40 minutes or longer, depending on your walking pace.

The month of roses. "We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses."
- Abraham Lincoln

To begin the tour, leave the Visitor Centre and turn left toward the small wooden footbridge over the stream bed. To the left of the bridge is a **1 – weeping Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* 'Pendula')**. Note the twisted form of its trunk and branches, in sharp contrast to the upright form of our native Douglas-fir much loved by BC's lumber industry, which you will see later. This bridge, as well as other new structures, was built with western redcedar recycled from a wooden walkway removed for the construction of the new Visitor Centre.

Continue up the slope ahead, past the BC jade drinking fountain on your left, and then take the paved path to the right, observing the variety of **Ornamental Grasses**. Stop at the **2 - weeping giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum* 'Pendulum')** with its interpretive sign on the corner; also look to the right of the path to see a new addition – **crinkled hairgrass (*Deschampsia flexuosa* 'Aurea')** which is happy to grow in part shade, then turn left. Follow the curved stone wall and climb the steps into the **Formal Rose Garden**. This style of pattern of paths and formal beds in an embroidery-like design is called 'parterre de broderie' after the late 16th century gardens at Versailles. Chosen for their resistance to disease and pests, (no pesticides or herbicides are used anywhere in the Garden) these roses are varieties of the modern **floribunda** and **hybrid tea** which can withstand the Pacific Northwest's cool wet weather. Past the central sundial, look in the far right central bed for **Rosa 'Brothers Grimm'**, one of the 'cheerful and charmingly robust' **Fairy Tale Series** of roses. The adjacent busts of David Douglas and Carl Linnaeus are tributes to these plant explorers and also to Linnaeus as the father of modern botanical nomenclature.

Pass through the stone arch to the **3 - Heritage Roses**, generally considered to be roses introduced before 1900, although that date is debated. These roses reflect centuries of breeding that have culminated in the modern hybrid tea roses, which combine the best qualities of the old roses but are more disease and pest-resistant. To the right of the path are the **China Roses**, the oldest of the Heritage Roses, grown in China for over 1000 years and used to introduce repeat flowering in most modern roses. On your left, large oval beds feature nine major groups of heritage roses. In the centre of the first bed to your left are several large **Rugosa Roses**, extremely hardy perpetual bloomers with deeply veined 'rugose' leaves. Look closely at one of the Grootendorst hybrids – the crimped petals appear as though they were cut with pinking shears. Here you will also see the **burnet rose (*Rosa pimpinellifolia*)** native to Europe and northwest Africa. This parent of the **Pimpinellifolia Roses** is an early bloomer with creamy-white flowers. In the next bed are the **Alba Roses**. Grown in Europe since A.D.100 and among the most ancient of all cultivated plants, Alba roses are shade tolerant and bear white or pink flowers. If time allows, you might like to explore more of the Heritage Rose beds and then return to this point.

Continue on the path towards the next junction. On your right **4 – is a bed of perennials** with interesting and contrasting foliage forms and colours - ***Penstemon*, *Heuchera*, *Euonymus***, and more. At the far end of the bed look behind the wooden directional sign to see the white bark of three **Himalayan white birches**, which frame the garden's largest **5 - mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*)** which may be in bloom. At this 3-way junction, turn around to enter the tree-lined **Laburnum Walk**. In early June this may still be magnificent with the bright yellow racemes of the **golden chain trees, (*Laburnum x watereri* 'Vossii')**; all parts of these trees are very poisonous. The contrast with the blue **ornamental onions (*Allium hollandicum* 'Purple Sensation')** below is beautiful. Before the end of the Laburnum Walk take the path to the right to follow the curved **6 - Lavender Walk**. At its end is a **7 - grouping of five small weeping trees** with distinctive, umbrella-like shapes, including a **weeping pussy willow (*Salix caprea* 'Weeping Sally')**, a **weeping pea tree (*Caragana arborescens* 'Pendula')**, and three **Camperdown elms (*Ulmus glabra* 'Camperdownii')**. In the early 19th Century a contorted branch of a Wych elm (sometimes known as Scots elm) was discovered growing along the ground at Camperdown House in Scotland. A cutting was taken of this odd mutation and it continues to be propagated today, usually grafted onto Wych elm root stock with its deeply grooved bark.

Turn right at the main path and pass beneath the shade of the **weeping beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* 'Pendula')** into the **Perennial Garden**. Stop and enjoy the wide variety of perennials arranged on your right in a traditional border backed by a **yew hedge (*Taxus baccata*)**. On the left the beds are set in front of a low stone wall – note the lovely bright yellow-green colour of the **golden false acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia* 'Frisia')** trees above. At the four-way intersection, turn left. Ahead on your right are four splendid mature **8 – Douglas-firs (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)** and beneath them an interpretive sign. Continue up the path, past the Haiku stone, and the weeping cherry trees in the David C. Lam Cherry

Grove, up to the crest of the hill. Here you can see a number of sculptures. Walk across the grass to your left to the marble statue with three faces called 9 - '**Observing Your Society**'. Carved by the now renowned Canadian Inuit artist **David Ruben Piqtoukun**, it is one of eleven large stone sculptures created on site by a group of international sculptors in 1975, the year the Garden was opened.

Enter the small, bark-mulched path to the right. A few feet ahead are the unusual **Himalayan blue poppies** (*Meconopsis betonicifolia*). Native to southeastern Tibet, this species was discovered in 1886 by British plant explorer Frank Kingdon Ward. To the left of the blue poppies are the **giant Himalayan lilies** (*Cardiocrinum giganteum*). 'Cardio' refers to this plant's distinctive heart-shaped leaves. While not difficult to grow, a seed takes 7 years to develop into a flowering plant.

Return to the sculpture and back to the paved path at the drinking fountain and look for the information sign that explains the history of VanDusen Botanical Garden. Continue up the path and cross the four-way junction. On the right hand corner you will see 10 - the **ornamental rhubarb** (*Rheum palmatum*). This is a cousin of the edible garden rhubarb, but this ornamental variety is harmful if eaten. Take the first small path to the right and, if you look up above the Misty Mountains sign, you may see some of the last remaining white, flower-like bracts of the **handkerchief tree** (*Davidia involucrata*). Continue down to the end of this short path.

When you reach the intersection you will see on your right the 11- **coffin tree** (*Taiwania cryptomerioides*). This graceful evergreen, which is related to the giant redwoods of California, will grow as tall as 60 meters in its native habitat in the mountains of Taiwan. These trees were highly valued by the Chinese who used their strong resinous wood to make coffins for grand funerals. This tree was donated to the garden by the University of BC Botanical Garden which works in close co-operation with VanDusen Botanical Garden.

Across the path on the diagonal corner is the highly unusual 12- **weeping maidenhair tree** (*Ginkgo biloba* 'Pendula') with an interpretive sign about ginkgos. Take the path to the left, following the stream to the waterfall. You may see the **Japanese water irises** and **Japanese fringed iris** (*Iris ensata* and *I. japonica*) still in flower along the stream.

The waterfall was designed and built by Bill Livingstone in the 1970's. All the lakes, ponds and connecting stream routes in the garden are man-made. Near the foot of the waterfall, the graceful 13 - **weeping katsura tree** (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum* 'Morioka Weeping') grows vigorously and requires regular pruning. On the right of the waterfall the tall **deodar cedar** (*Cedrus deodara*) sweeps its downcast branches over the pond.

Continue past the waterfall, and look up to your right to see the trail which is edged by a **golden willow fence** (*Salix alba* subsp. *vitellina*). Willow contains a naturally occurring rooting hormone, and this fence was created by inserting unrooted willow wands into the ground, allowing the willow to develop its own roots. In addition, willow bark has been used medicinally for centuries to cure pain because it contains salicin, a chemical similar to aspirin. In the 1800's salicin was used to develop aspirin.

Continue up the main path past the intersection. You will see on your left **candelabra primroses** (*Primula wilsonii*) which enjoy the damp shade. The path eventually curves left and goes down to join the main paved path. Turn left, past the stone entrance to the **Meditation Garden**, then turn right at the traditionally-painted **Korean Pavilion**, and proceed down the **Rhododendron Walk** where you may find some late-blooming rhododendrons.

Further down the walk is the Garden's main collection of **hydrangeas** on your left. When you reach the intersection at the bottom of the walk, continue straight ahead along the curving path past the Minotaur sculpture. Here seasonal displays feature colourful bulbs and annuals. Take a closer look at the plants in the **Alpine Troughs** as you cross the intersection. Adapted to exposed alpine conditions, these plants are typically much smaller than their lower-elevation cousins.

Continue past the **Formal Rose Garden** and turn left at the end of the stone wall into the **Black Garden** where plants with nearly black flowers, foliage or fruit are contrasted by various shades of lime and gold coloured plants. Keep right and stroll along beside **Livingstone Lake**. On a sunny day you may spot turtles basking on the warm rocks that border the lake.

Look across the lake for the best view of the **Visitor Centre's green roof**. There low-growing, low-maintenance **fescues** and **ryegrass** are interspersed with thousands of bulbs, including *Fritillaria* and *Erythronium*. For more information about the Visitor Centre's role in the Garden's commitment to sustainability please visit the **Information Desk** at the garden entrance.

We hope you enjoyed your tour and will come back to visit us again soon.